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ABSTRACT

An annotated list of readings is suggested for high school teachers of U.S. history and geography at grade 11 and for teachers of courses in the principles of democracy at grade 12. The list was designed for use in California where the 11th grade curriculum emphasizes 20th century U.S. history and the 12th grade concentrates on the institution of U.S. government and the comparison of different styles of government in the world today. Although the bibliography was prepared for use by California teachers, teachers from around the United States and other parts of the world might find it a useful resource. Among principles of selection for the list were: each book must be germane to the subject at hand; each must deal with a significant aspect of the subject; and each must be interesting and readable. The reading list has six sections: historical fiction, biography and autobiography, contemporary public affairs, books about education, U.S. history, and European and world history. (DB)

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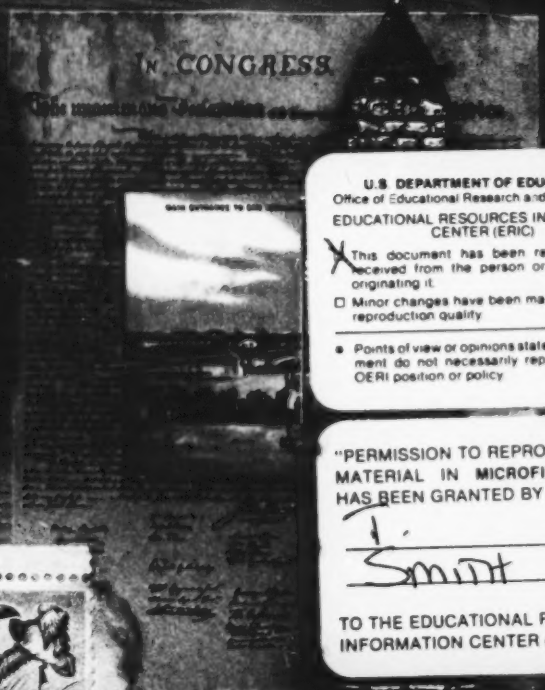

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Readings *for* Teachers *of* United States History *and* Government

Compiled by the
History-Social Science and Visual
and Performing Arts Unit

California Department of Education

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A list of other publications available from the Department appears on page 32. A complete list may be obtained by writing to the address given above or by calling the Sales Unit at (916) 445-1260.

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Foreword

Historian Barbara Tuchman once described books as being the carriers of civilization. Biographies, novels, essays, poetry, plays, speeches, histories, and religious literature not only reflect the thoughts and values of the cultures from which they spring; they transmit those ideas so that human understanding develops and emerges in ways that would otherwise be impossible. Those of us who work to preserve and improve civilization by educating young minds in history–social science need the intellectual and emotional sustenance that comes from reading important books. That's what this reading list is about.

A young teacher was once heard to remark, "You have to be very full to teach." Her point is well taken. The background knowledge we bring to our history–social science classrooms enhances our teaching and better enables us to lead students to make important discoveries. The books listed in these pages are excellent places to begin in achieving that aim. They were recommended by some of the most vibrant minds in the nation today and make truly exciting reading for high school teachers, particularly those of United States history and government courses.

Jean-Francois Revel's *How Democracies Perish* is a case in point. While the first intimations of freedom in Eastern Europe give cause for hope, Revel's urgent and penetrating work is a sobering reminder of the dangers we must heed if liberty is not to be lost from within the free world. There are also Frederick Lewis Allen's *Only Yesterday*, a gimlet-eyed view of the United States during the 1920s, biographies such as *Bearing the Cross* and *Mornings on Horseback*, and a range of historical fiction and criticism. These make compelling readings as they challenge us to broaden our perceptions and understand various perspectives. They provide opportunity for the inner, personal transformation that can occur only through study.

Teachers are encouraged to read extensively, ponder, and discuss these substantive works. The suggested literature not only increases our knowledge of historical eras and issues but also provides the impetus for informal, collegial reading circles. The readings all reflect course content for grades nine through twelve in the *History–Social Science Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*.

Studying these works is one of the best forms of staff development available. The cost is minimal; the rewards are endless.

Bill Honig

State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Preface

This is a reading list, not a bibliography. It is not comprehensive. It is not meant to be. Rather, it is highly selective and subjective. It consists of suggested readings for high school teachers of U.S. history and geography at grade eleven and for teachers of courses in the principles of democracy at grade twelve. It was designed for use in California, where the eleventh grade curriculum emphasizes twentieth century American history and the twelfth grade—one semester of it, anyway—concentrates on the institutions of American government and the comparison of different systems of government in the world today. Much of what would be interesting to the teacher of one of these subjects might also appeal to a teacher of the other; however, no distinction is made within the reading list.

Distinguished scholars and expert advisers contributed to this list. (See page viii for the names of those who suggested materials for inclusion.) The list was drawn up by the Educational Excellence Network, an educational reform organization that advocates the importance of history, literature, and the humanities in public school instruction. The organization publishes a monthly publication, *Network News and Views*, that deals with current issues in education. The address of the Educational Excellence Network is 1112 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 785-2985.

The principles of selection for this list were simple:

- Each book must be germane to the subject at hand.
- Each must deal with a significant aspect of the subject.
- Each must be interesting and readable.
- As of early 1989, each must have been in print in a softcover edition, such that anyone with access to a bookstore could reasonably expect to obtain it—and without paying an exorbitant price for it. Prospective readers will, in most cases, also be able to obtain books on this list from their local libraries.

The list has six sections: "Historical Fiction," "Biography and Autobiography," "Contemporary Public Affairs," "Books About Education," "American History," and "European and World History."

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Special thanks are extended to Andrew Forsaith, Research Assistant at the Educational Excellence Network, who burned most of the calories for this project and saw it through with speed and precision. And a word of appreciation is given, too, to Mary Ellen Obester, maestro of the word processor.

I. Historical Fiction

O'Connor, Edwin.
The Last Hurrah.
Little, Brown, 1985 (originally published in 1956).

A thinly veiled and sympathetic look at Boston's celebrated (and durable) mayor, James Michael Curley. Said the Manchester *Guardian*, it "turns out to be a singular pleasure, lively to its last page and written with a bounce that makes up for any stylistic shortcomings. It is the best kind of journalistic writing—sentimentally cynical, stimulating and like Frank Skeffington, hero of the novel, pulling out all the stops to get its effects."

Through this book, we also glimpse "city boss" politics (in the 1930s and '40s mainly), Irish-American life, and Boston. If it has a flaw, it is the slightly rose-tinted lens through which that glimpse comes.

448 pages; ISBN 0-316-62659-7.

Warren, Robert Penn.
All the King's Men.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982 (originally published in 1946).

Another outstanding modern political novel *cum* character study, this one fictionalizes the story of Huey Long, a longtime governor of Louisiana, who was often termed a demagogue. Diana Trilling wrote of it in 1946: "For sheer virtuosity, for the sustained drive of its prose, for the speed and evenness of its pacing, for its precision of language, its genius of colloquialism, I doubt indeed whether it can be matched in American fiction. . . . Mr. Warren's study of a political leader is intended to investigate the moral relativism inherent in the historical process."

The author won a Pulitzer Prize for this novel, which has also been made into an engaging movie.

438 pages; ISBN 0-15604762-4.

Cozzens, James Gould.
The Just and the Unjust.
Bantam, 1984 (originally published in 1942).

A tale set in a Connecticut town during a three-day trial of two defendants, gangsters, who have murdered a drug dealer. The protagonist is Assistant District Attorney Abner Coates. "In tangy, humorous writing," commented Edward Weeks in the *Atlantic*, the author "has dramatized the legal process in scenes so human and so clear that at the end you realize you have been watching democracy at the core—and almost at its best."

434 pages; ISBN 0-15-646578-7.

Koestler, Arthur.
Darkness at Noon.
Bantam, 1984 (originally published in 1941).

A fictionalized account of Joseph Stalin's purge trials. The account is grounded in the author's own experiences in Europe in the 1930s. As described in the *New Statesman & Nation*, it "is a tale of the imprisonment, confession and death of one of the Old Bolsheviks. . . . Rubashov, one of the last survivors of the original Central Committee of the Communist Party, is arrested, is charged with incredible crimes, denies everything, is tortured by means of deprivation of sleep, etc., confesses everything, and is shot in the back of the neck. The story ends with a young girl in whose house Rubashov had once lodged wondering whether to denounce her father to the Secret Police as a way of securing a flat for herself and her future husband."

267 pages; ISBN 0-553-26595-4.

Cather, Willa.
My Antonia.
Houghton Mifflin, 1988 (originally published in 1918).

One of several fine historical novels that depict the immigrant experience. Rolvaag's *Giants in the Earth* is another. Both can be read with advantage by students, also. When the book came out, *The Nation* said that it is "among the best of our recent interpretations of American life."

272 pages; ISBN 0-395-08356-7.

Cahan, Abraham.
The Rise of David Levinsky.
Harper & Row, 1960 (originally published in 1917).

Another first-rate (but lesser known) novel about the immigrant experience. Written in autobiographical format (i.e., in the first-person singular), it is the saga of a Russian Jew who came to America in 1885 at the age of twenty years. Part of it depicts ghetto life in Russia; the rest is set in turn-of-the-century New York. It is also a novel about business—in which David, the hero, does exceedingly well—and about human relationships, in which domain he is less successful. The work is an excellent social history. The *New York Times* wrote that "the dominant quality in this novel is the effect it gives of being altogether real. Whether the scene be laid in the Russian ghetto or the big expensive hotel in the Catskills where rich Jews congregated, whether it is in the Division Street factory or David's fine place on First Avenue, this sense of reality is always present. . . . In this story of 'the rise' of one individual is pictured the development of an entire class, as well as of what has become of one of the great industries of the country."

530 pages; ISBN 0-06-13192-0.

Wouk, Herman.
The Caine Mutiny.
Pocket Books, 1983 (originally published in 1951).

A novel so well known as perhaps not to bear mention, but anyone who hasn't already read it may welcome the reminder of this first-rate war story *cum* sea story *cum* character study. The setting, of course, is World War II (no surprise to Wouk fans familiar with the more recent *Winds of War* and *War & Remembrance*). Willie Keith, the hero, goes from midshipman to captain of the USS *Caine*. He has a love affair, too. The mutiny—surely the most celebrated since the one on the *Bounty*—is a dramatic study of conflicting loyalties and convictions, as well as personalities. Wrote Edward Weeks in the *Atlantic*, "It has the time sense, the enormous boredom, the sense of being hopelessly isolated and cut off from home, which every veteran remembers; it has the scope and the skill to reveal how men are tested, exposed, and developed under the long routine of war; finally, it has the slow-fused but inevitably accumulating tension of the mutiny, which gives both form and explosive climax to the story."

498 pages; ISBN 0-671-60425-2.

Shaara, Michael.
The Killer Angels.
Ballantine, 1987.

Another war novel, this one about Gettysburg, the bloody and consequential Civil War battle. This is historical fiction of a high order, with the actual battle fictionalized in order to evoke it through the words, deeds, feelings, and attitudes of "real" people. Phoebe Adams, writing in the *Atlantic* about this Pulitzer Prize–winning book, observed that "Gettysburg is a provocative battle, for although what was done is fearsomely well documented, why it was done remains elusive. To satisfy his own curiosity, Mr. Shaara has turned the events into a novel, following selected officers on both sides through the four-day slaughter and taking a novelist's liberty of invention with their motives and reactions. It is an unusual project and has worked out well, with excitement and plausibility."

384 pages; ISBN 0-345-34810-9.

Steinbeck, John.
In Dubious Battle.
Penguin, 1979 (originally published in 1936).

A radical work of "proletarian fiction," set in the California fruit country in the 1930s. It is the story of a fruit pickers' strike as seen through the eyes of Jim Nolan, a sympathizer. Why and how these migratory workers turned to revolt is the story's theme. The book "cannot be dismissed as a propaganda novel," observed a *New Republic* reviewer. "It is another version of the eternal human fight against injustice. It is an especially good version, dramatically intense, beautifully written without being too literary for the subject matter, and its climaxes have a sweeping power."

368 pages; ISBN 0-14-004888-X.

II. Biography and Autobiography

Garrow, David J.
Bearing the Cross: Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1988.

A Pulitzer Prize–winning profile of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. C. Vann Woodward describes it as "the most informative life of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the most thorough study of the civil rights movement, or the large part of it in which King and the SCLC were active. If at times King seems to loom larger than life, it is at least made clear that even though the movement would have taken place anyway, it would never have been the same without him."

This is not a complete biography of Dr. King. It begins with the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955 and follows him, and the southern civil rights movement, until his assassination in Memphis in 1968.

800 pages; ISBN 0-394-75623-1.

Branch, Taylor.
Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954–63.
Simon and Schuster, 1988.

The first thick volume of an immense "narrative biographical history" that examines the civil rights movement, and much else that was happening in America at the time, again through the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "Branch's meticulous research," says the *Washington Monthly*, "laces the saga with nuance and irony. There is news in his additions to the story of the FBI's dishonor, but much of the book's joy is simply in the reading." Of perhaps special interest to teachers are some illuminating passages about the nature and influence of Dr. King's own education—both his general education and his theological studies.

700 pages; presently available in hardcover only; ISBN 0-671-46097-8.

Anderson, Jervis.
A. Philip Randolph: A Biographical Portrait.
University of California Press, 1986.

An account of the life of the great black union organizer and civil rights leader. Randolph's life (still being lived when this book was published—he died in 1979) began in Florida before the turn of the century. Among his great achievements were the organization and legitimization—both in the eyes of business and in the halls of labor—of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, the first black union, and many events in the civil rights movement of the 1950s and '60s, perhaps most memorably the 1963 March on Washington. Wrote Arnold Beichman in the *Christian Science Monitor*, the author "has given us the life of an American who made an unforgettable contribution to strengthening democracy in our still-divided land."

398 pages; ISBN 0-520-05505-5.

McCullough, David.
Mornings on Horseback.
Simon and Schuster, Touchstone Books, 1982.

The childhood and young manhood of Theodore Roosevelt in the period of his life during which the sickly little boy becomes transformed (transforms himself, is more like it) into a spirited, hardy, and determined man. The book also depicts the Roosevelt family, Theodore's education, and a good deal about life in late nineteenth century America—at least for a young man from privileged circumstances.

445 pages; ISBN 0-671-44754-8.

Morris, Edmund.
The Rise of Theodore Roosevelt
Ballantine, 1980.

Another partial biography of T.R., this one by the man Ronald Reagan chose to become *his* authorized biographer. Long as it is, it tracks Roosevelt only until McKinley's death made him president in 1901. A vast, exciting chronicle, it is a classic example of the biographer's art, spanning Roosevelt's childhood, education, cowboy days, Rough Rider exploits, police commissionership, New York governorship, and the rest. We see the man in the context of the times. The prose is uncommonly well wrought, also, leading the *New York Time*'s reviewer to call it "one

of those rare works that is both definitive for the period it covers and fascinating to read for sheer entertainment."

886 pages; ISBN 0-345-33902-9.

Greenstein, Fred I.
The Hidden-Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader.
Basic Books, 1984.

One of the best examples of the recent (and ongoing) reevaluation of President Eisenhower and his administration. Broadly psychological in its approach, this well-told account examines Eisenhower's style in connection with several major episodes. Perhaps the most interesting of these is his handling of McCarthyism—a critical sequence in modern American history that is skillfully presented here.

286 pages; ISBN 0-465-02951-5, TB5121.

Conkin, Paul K.
Big Daddy from the Pedernales: Lyndon Baines Johnson.
G.K. Hall, 1986.

One of several good books from which a person seeking a biography of LBJ can choose. This one is a bit shorter and more manageable than most. It is also well balanced and readable. The *Journal of American History* termed it "a thoughtful and engaging portrait, completed in broad and vivid strokes."

344 pages; ISBN 00-8057-7772-5.

McPherson, Harry.
A Political Education: A Washington Memoir.
Houghton Mifflin, 1988.

A memoir of life in Washington between 1956 and 1968 as experienced by Harry McPherson, who served LBJ as counsel in the Senate and at the White House, with tours of duty in between at the Pentagon and State Department. The book spans much of the Eisenhower era and all of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. This edition has an engaging foreword by Senator Daniel P. Moynihan, who was also in Washington during most of that time. The *New Yorker* comments that "This exceedingly readable and humane testament . . . is nowhere polemical or self-serving, and it is one of the best books on life in Washington to have been published in this century."

416 pages; ISBN 395-48899-0.

Acheson, Dean.
Present at the Creation: My Years in the State Department.
W.W. Norton, 1987.

A personal account of the shaping of U.S. foreign policy between 1941 and 1953 by one of its principal architects. Acheson, of course, held senior posts at the State Department throughout this period, including that of secretary from 1949 to 1953. He has written a polished and well-documented book, but quite a bulky one. (One reviewer said his "reminiscences sometimes seem too long by three-thirds.") Yet, historian Frank Freidel calls these memoirs "urbane and entertaining" and terms their author a "witty storyteller and a painter of memorable word portraits." This is a book to read—or read in—if especially interested in the aftermath of World War II, the beginnings of the cold war, the Korean War, and the McCarthy era.

848 pages; ISBN 0-393-30412-4.

Isaacson, Walter, and Evan Thomas.
The Wise Men: Six Friends and the World They Made.
Simon and Schuster, 1987.

Another thick but informative book about American foreign policy in which Dean Acheson looms large. Actually a collective biography of six men (Robert Lovett, John McCloy, Averell Harriman, Charles Bohlen, and George Kennan as well as Acheson), it was described by the *New Republic*'s reviewer as "a fascinating study of the makers, and the making, of American foreign policy during the cold war years." All six of the subjects, of course, played prominent (though rather different) roles in postwar policymaking. Most of them, in fact, played multiple roles over many years—and in early April, 1989, Kennan was still testifying before Congress. That they were friends from somewhat similar backgrounds helps make for an engrossing tale. Henry Kissinger, in a jacket blurb, says, "This is an insightful and compelling account of the dedication of these 'wise men' to the service of our country on behalf of principles beyond partisanship."

816 pages; ISBN 0-671-65712-7.

Hook, Sidney.
Out of Step: An Unquiet Life in the Twentieth Century.
Carrol and Graff, 1988.

A compelling personal narrative by one of the intellectual giants of twentieth century America. This book is described by Arthur M.

Schlesinger, Jr., as "clearly and forcefully written in the familiar Hook style. It contains pungent sketches of people encountered along the way. . . . Underneath the reasoned surface of the text throbs a repressed rage. This is not a life recollected in tranquillity." The author didn't mean it to be. The book tells the reader relatively little about Hook's personal life (or his formal academic work as a distinguished philosopher) but a great deal about what he calls his "political and intellectual autobiography." Yet, it is absorbing nonetheless, spanning as it does most of the political and intellectual turmoil of the century. It also touches on Hook's own relationship with many other influential figures, such as John Dewey, Bertrand Russell, and Albert Einstein.

628 pages; ISBN 0-88184-399-7.

de Saint-Exupery, Antoine.
Flight to Arras.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969 (originally published in 1942).

A memoir-essay by the French poet and aviation pioneer, first published during World War II, that explores the strengths and weaknesses of free people caught in defeat and reflects on what democracy requires of men and women if it is to survive and safeguard human dignity.

155 pages; ISBN 0-15-631880-6.

Sevareid, Eric.
Not So Wild a Dream.
Atheneum, 1978 (originally published in 1946).

A beautifully written autobiography that treats the distinguished commentator's youth, education, and career as a journalist through World War II. He offers a remarkable combination of tough experience, common sense, and wholehearted devotion to the American dream. It is long but fine.

516 pages; ISBN 0-689-70578-6, 235.

McDonough, James.
Platoon Leader.
Bantam, 1986.

A comparatively short and readable memoir and informal study of how people behave in wartime. The author, a West Point graduate, served in the Vietnam War as leader of an infantry platoon. Says the dust jacket:

"The pressures of leadership weigh heavily on Lieutenant McDonough as he struggles to meet his responsibilities to his men and their mission. Caught up in the savagery of war, he is not willing to abandon a sense of humanity. Yet in combat comes the chilling realization that there is a fine line between rational man and kill-crazed animal."

224 pages; ISBN 0-553-25462-6.

Rodriguez, Richard.
Hunger of Memory: The Education of Richard Rodriguez.
Bantam, 1982.

A splendidly wrought memoir that many people have heard is controversial but that not so many people have actually read. Rodriguez is a California writer of Mexican descent who sensitively depicts some of the tensions and ambiguities of life in an immigrant family in the United States, and in a Hispanic family in particular. This book is sometimes—wrongly—described as a critique of bilingual education. Though it deals quite carefully with Rodriguez's important distinction between "public" and "private" language and his view of the school's role in language-teaching, this is a much broader and more evocative autobiography of particular relevance to educators. Said the *New York Times Book Review*, "The chapters Mr. Rodriguez devotes to his early experiences of language are uncannily sensitive to the nuances of language learning. . . . Only at school did the immense distance between the two languages begin truly to matter. . . . The wedge driven into his family's intimate life was not English, he now believes, but education, the emotionally charged evolution every family must experience as its children go to school and grow partly away. . . ."

208 pages; ISBN 0-553-23193-6.

III. Contemporary Public Affairs

Edited by John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson.
Can the Government Govern?
Brookings Institution, 1988.

A recent Brookings study (a bit dry, like many such) that takes up the important question posed in the title. Why does the government seem to work so badly? Why is it so ineffectual at solving the problems it addresses? These matters are examined through particular policy issues and governmental institutions. Three of the former are energy policy, trade policy, and macroeconomic policy. Under the latter heading we find studies of the White House staff, the Congress, and the "politics of bureaucratic structure." Though not a prescriptive work, the authors and coeditors plainly conclude that effective government requires more effective governmental institutions—and they suggest for consideration some significant changes in the ways that ours work. Some are straightforward: the President should give his staff "clear direction and vigilantly oversee its performance." Others, such as a balanced-budget amendment to the Constitution, are fraught with controversy.

220 pages; ISBN 0-8157-1407-6.

Sowell, Thomas.
Civil Rights: Rhetoric or Reality?
Morrow, 1985.

A short but challenging treatise by the controversial economist at Stanford's Hoover Institution, published on the thirtieth anniversary of the *Brown* decision and the twentieth anniversary of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. It exhumes much of the conventional wisdom about civil rights, and does so in provocative, readable language. "This is an imaginative, hard-hitting critique of the 'rhetoric' versus the 'reality' of civil rights in America," commented *Choice* magazine, "and Sowell's revolutionary view—that government programs such as affirmative action, forced busing, and food stamps will not bring the disadvantaged black minority into the economic and social mainstream and might better be abandoned—will anger many. Those who truly believe in the

goal of racial equality, however, ought to give serious thought to what this creative scholar has to say."

168 pages; ISBN 0-688-06269-5.

Thernstrom, Abigail M.
Whose Votes Count: Affirmative Action and Minority Voting Rights.
Harvard University Press, 1987.

An important analysis of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and its evolution during the ensuing quarter century. As summarized by the publisher, the book seeks to "show how a measure . . . crafted to open the polling booths to Southern blacks has evolved into a powerful tool for affirmative action in the electoral sphere." The reviewer for the *New Republic* wrote that "Thernstrom blends a detailed understanding of legislative history, case law, and administrative politics with a strong concern for the plight of minorities and a keen sense of the give-and-take of electoral politics."

316 pages; ISBN 0-674-95195-6.

Broder, David S.
Behind the Front Page.
Simon and Schuster, Touchstone Books, 1987.

A critical look at the reporting of national news in the American media. Broder, of course, is a highly regarded political columnist based at the *Washington Post*. Many—but certainly not all—of the journalistic boo-boos in the "cautionary tales" he tells were his own. The *New Republic* calls the book "a compendium of journalistic folly, an analysis of how the press sometimes betrays its responsibility to the public."

The author's plea for firmer journalistic ethics and higher standards is hard to dispute. The particulars of his book may be of special benefit to the teacher interested in how to help students to become more discerning consumers of the news.

393 pages; ISBN 0-671-65721-6.

Taubman, Jane A., and William Taubman.
Moscow Spring: January to June 1988.
Simon and Schuster, 1989.

A timely and engaging account of what life in the Soviet Union is like during the Gorbachev era. The authors (and their two children) spent the

first half of 1988 in Moscow. The title has a double meaning, for this readable book deals with both the Taubman family's experiences during their spring in Moscow and the "springtime" of *glasnost* and *perestroika* in Soviet society. The authors are Soviet specialists (on the Amherst College faculty) and had previously spent a considerable amount of time there, so they do not write as tourists but as knowledgeable veterans. What they saw and experienced was both encouraging and cautionary. "The obstacles to success," they write, "are just as great—even greater we often found ourselves thinking—as Moscow Spring's potential. . . . The forces that would turn back the clock are numerous and powerful. . . ."

301 pages; presently available only in hardcover; ISBN 0-671-67731-4.

Revel, Jean-Francois.
How Democracies Perish.
Harper and Row, 1985.

A provocative book by a celebrated French intellectual about some of the threats that democracy faces in the modern world and some of the characteristics of democracies that make them disinclined to look after their own survival. The *New York Times* reviewer termed it "penetrating, swashbuckling and at times dangerously simplistic."

388 pages; ISBN 0-06-097011-1, PL7011.

IV. Books About Education

[We have made no effort here to blanket the many recent studies, critiques, and commentaries on American education, only to include a few works of special salience to teachers of U.S. history and government.]

Gagnon, Paul.
Democracy's Untold Story.
American Federation of Teachers, 1987.

A critical review of five widely used world history textbooks, soon to be joined by Professor Gagnon's evaluation of American history textbooks. Meant to be read by teachers, it seeks to answer this question: "How helpful is each text in teaching the essential ideas and institutions of democracy, its development over time, and its present condition at home and elsewhere in the world?"

Not helpful enough, it would appear. "These world history texts," Gagnon concludes after a careful analysis, "leave the story of democracy largely untold. Its ideas and principles are left unclear, incomplete. Its origins, adventures, needs, and significance are nowhere systematically presented. Relying on such books alone, teachers cannot teach, and students cannot grasp, the compelling story of people's struggles for freedom, self-government, and justice on earth."

Gagnon's study proceeds chronologically, from "The Legacy of the Greeks" to "Democracy in the World Since 1945." The five textbooks that Gagnon reviews are:

- Beers, Burton F. *World History: Patterns of World Civilization.* Prentice-Hall, 1983.
- Kownslar, Allan O., and Terry L. Smart. *People and Our World: A Study of World History.* Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981.
- Mazour, Anatole G.; John M. Peoples; and Theodore K. Rabb. *People and Nations: A World History.* Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1983.
- Roselle, Daniel. *Our Common Heritage: A World History.* Ginn and Company, 1984.
- Wallbank, Walter Thomas, and others. *History and Life: The World and Its People* (Second edition). Scott, Foresman, 1982.

142 pages.

Ravitch, Diane.
The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945–1980.
Basic Books, 1985.

A history of American education during 35 eventful years that spans the loyalty investigations of the McCarthy era, the civil rights movement, the period of campus disruptions, and sundry efforts by the federal government to change and improve the educational system. "In the future," comments Ernest Boyer, "anyone trying to understand the sometimes puzzling developments in education in the fifties, sixties and seventies will have to begin with this book."

384 pages; ISBN 0-465-08757-4, CN5132.

Gutmann, Amy.
Democratic Education.
Princeton University Press, 1987.

A sometimes slow-moving work of political philosophy that deals with education (including higher education). But it repays readers for their attention. Comments former New York City school chancellor Frank J. Macchiarola, "This is a thoughtful volume, carefully written with a strong belief in increased citizen participation as the critical necessity of a democratic society. It is a book that urges restraints on ideology, authority, and autonomy as it develops a theory of democratic education that supports increased involvement by those concerned with schooling."

332 pages; ISBN 0-691-02277-1.

Finn, Chester E., Jr., and Diane Ravitch.
What Do Our Seventeen-Year-Olds Know? A Report on the First National Assessment of History and Literature.
Harper and Row, 1988.

A report of the results of the first national assessment of eleventh graders' knowledge of American history and literature. The study was carried out in 1986 by the National Assessment of Educational Progress. This book examines the bleak findings—the average student correctly answered just 52 percent of the mostly elementary questions about U.S. history—and suggests what might be done to improve matters.

320 pages; ISBN 0-06-091520X, PL1520, PL.

Barzun, Jacques.
Teacher in America.
Liberty Fund, 1981.

Paul Gagnon describes this work as "still the wisest, most generous-spirited and yet acerbic book about education I have ever known. It can be any teacher's best friend, from first day of fright all the way through one's decades of classroom experience. Barzun is at his best, giving the reader the feeling that he [or she] is having a private conversation with the wittiest and most reasonable man on earth."

496 pages; ISBN 0-913966-79-7.

Butts, R. Freeman.
The Civic Mission in Educational Reform.
Hoover Institution Press, 1989.

The author criticizes recent educational reform efforts (and reformers) for insufficient attention to civic education. The author also supplies a mostly chronological account of the evolution of civic education (and the place of the "civic mission" in education) in the United States, and a number of recommendations that would, in his view, bring about a needed "renaissance of the civic mission" in our educational system. This new book is likely to interest civics teachers in particular and history and social studies teachers in general.

384 pages; ISBN 08179-8772X.

V. American History

Woodward, C. Vann.
The Strange Career of Jim Crow.
Oxford University Press, 1974 (originally published in 1955).

A celebrated study of segregation and "Jim Crowism" in post–Civil War America. First published the year after the *Brown* decision, it was an exploration, wrote Woodward, of the "twilight zone that lies between living memory and written history." It was his experience that "impatient reformers are as surprised or incredulous as foot-dragging conservatives when confronted by some of the little-known history of Jim Crow." So Woodward set out to illuminate that history. Subsequent editions carry the saga through the events of the 1950s and '60s. Relatively brief and utterly readable, this is fine history by a great historian.

233 pages; ISBN 0-19-501805-2.

Josephson, Matthew.
The Robber Barons.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1962 (originally published in 1934).

A classic account of the "great capitalists" of the late nineteenth century, men such as Rockefeller, Carnegie, Morgan, and Vanderbilt, who made huge fortunes in industry and finance and powerfully influenced the nation's history. This is the story, by a staunch critic, of how they made their money, how they lived, how the country reacted to them, and what happened in consequence. Josephson, it may be noted, wrote in the depths of the Great Depression; his basic view of his subjects is suggested by the title of the book.

474 pages; ISBN 0-15-676790-2.

Allen, Frederick Lewis.
Only Yesterday.
Harper and Row, 1964 (originally published in 1931).

A classic study of the United States in the 1920s. Opening as World War I ends and closing in the early days of the Great Depression, it examines culture, intellectual life, and economics as well as mainline political

history. When it was first published, the London *Times* commented that "Anyone who seeks a trustworthy, fair-minded and graphic picture of that land of piquant contrasts which is modern America will find no better account of it than in Mr. Allen's pages." A quarter century later, historian Roger Butterfield termed it "by far the best account of all that happened in the United States during the wonderfully wacky 1920s." Later historiography has corrected a few of Allen's impressions (such as what Paul Johnson terms his "Babylonian" view of President Harding), but this remains an evocative and readable account, even as the era with which it deals recedes well beyond yesterday.

361 pages; ISBN 0-06-080004-6, P4.

Hofstadter, Richard.
The Age of Reform: From Bryan to F.D.R.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1960.

Another enduring classic, often used in college U.S. history courses and occasionally with advanced high school students. It examines the reform impulse in the United States from about 1890 to 1940. Hence, it is mainly about populism, progressivism, and the New Deal. "The center of attention in these pages," writes the author in his introduction, "is neither the political campaigns, the enactments of legislatures, the decisions of the courts, nor the work of regulatory commissions, but the ideas of the participants—their conception of what was wrong, the changes they sought, and the techniques they thought desirable." Commented R. K. Carr in the *New York Herald Tribune*, "When the last word has been written on this era in American life, this present volume . . . will almost surely stand as one of the best. Writing in a critical spirit, Professor Hofstadter never hesitates to bring all of his resources as a shrewd, informed and dispassionate scholar to bear in exposing the foibles of the reformer."

328 pages; ISBN 0-394-70095-3.

Morris, Charles R.
A Time of Passion: America 1960–1980.
Penguin, 1986.

Morris attempts to do for the 1960s and 1970s what Allen did for the 1920s. Selective in its coverage—it dwells on the War on Poverty, Vietnam, economics, and civil rights—and personal in its judgments, *Commonweal* says of this book that the author's "sheer imaginative honesty, grounded in experience as a 1960s frontline administrator of urban pro-

grams, lets him dissect the period's excesses with a wry, classical stoicism and a slightly mischievous moral edge that retains its optimism within a sense of its own limits."

288 pages; ISBN 0-14-008643-9.

Prange, Gordon W.
At Dawn We Slept: The Untold Story of Pearl Harbor.
Penguin, 1982.

The definitive account of the attack on Pearl Harbor—and its antecedents and consequences—that drew the United States into World War II. A very long and extremely detailed, practically minute-by-minute chronicle, it is also lively reading.

892 pages; ISBN 0-14-006455-9.

Terkel, Studs.
The Good War.
Ballantine, 1985.

An oral history of World War II, composed of the recorded memories of more than 100 individuals, including Americans, Japanese, Germans, civilians, prisoners-of-war, entertainers, government officials, and so forth. "Terkel pursues several aspects of the war that haven't been overexposed," remarks the *Newsweek* reviewer. "Through his talks with individual entrepreneurs who made money in the war effort, and with men in government who were responsible for creating the war economy, Terkel shows us how it happened. He pays particular attention to the plight of the Japanese-Americans who were interned for the duration. . . . Terkel gives no subject more space than the condition of the black man in the military. . . . One man explains his problems as a homosexual in the Marines. Another describes the panic in San Francisco after Pearl Harbor, when a Japanese invasion was expected. Others speak of the particular savagery of the fighting in the Pacific. . . . A pilot admits that he was 'drunk. Bombed out of my mind' when he raided Frankfurt."

608 pages; ISBN 0-345-32568-0.

Mead, Walter Russell.
Mortal Splendor: The American Empire in Transition.
Houghton Mifflin, 1987.

An opinionated view of America's "liberal empire" and what has gone wrong with it since the mid-1960s. "If the founding fathers were to

return to life and consider the state of the nation," Mead writes, "they would not be optimistic about the future of republican institutions in the United States. . . . Much of what we consider politics-as-usual would strike them as the terminal practices of an empire in decay." He urges a "new social contract" at home, and a radically revamped foreign policy overseas. Though a reviewer for the *Annals* of the American Academy of Political and Social Science terms this a "terribly naive" work, it is a provocative one.

381 pages; ISBN 0-395-46809-4.

Boorstin, Daniel J.
The Americans 3: The Democratic Experience.
Random House, 1974.

The final volume of Boorstin's great trilogy. Dealing chiefly with the social history of the United States since the Civil War, it is not so much a chronicle of events as an account of the evolution of the national character, with considerable emphasis on the influence of technology and the changing institutions of our society. A long book divided into 61 short chapters, it is organized under such headings as "The Urban Quest for Place," "Language, Knowledge and the Arts," and "Consumption Communities." Said a reviewer for *Time* magazine, Boorstin's "breezy, anecdotal style makes his book a rousing reading experience."

717 pages; ISBN 0-394-71011-8.

Edited by Daniel Boorstin.
An American Primer.
New American Library, 1968.

A splendid reference tool that may also interest the teacher who is eager to get reacquainted with some of the central documents and basic works of American history. Starting with the Mayflower Compact and ending with LBJ's 1965 address on voting rights, it ranges widely and intelligently across 350 years. Particularly valuable are the short interpretive essays—written by a remarkable array of distinguished scholars—that accompany each document. "When he uses the word 'primer' in his title," notes Raymond Walters in the *Saturday Review*, "Mr. Boorstin does not mean that he is offering a book for beginners but rather that he is concerned with elements, with fundamentals. . . . The person likely to benefit most from this primer is . . . someone who has already read a good deal in our history."

492 pages; ISBN 0-452-00760-7.

Thernstrom, Stephan.
A History of the American People: To Eighteen Seventy-Seven (Vol. I).
A History of the American People: Since 1865 (Vol. II).
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1984.

The only *textbook* in this reading list. Mindful that many teachers will be weary of textbooks, the compilers of this list also considered the possibility that some U.S. history instructors may welcome an opportunity to brush up on their own knowledge of the subject. We know no better college-level history textbook than this two-volume work by a distinguished Harvard historian. Potential readers should note that this is predominantly a *social* history. Though the essential events of political history are all here, indeed are lucidly presented, of special value are Thernstrom's sections on such topics as "Industrialism and the Wage Earner," the "Auto Age," the "New Woman," and "The Great Society and the Great Upheaval." Note that Volume I ends in 1877, while Volume II begins in 1865.

Volume I: 398 pages; ISBN 0-15-536530-4.
Volume II: 782 pages; ISBN 0-15-536531-2.

Degler, Carl N.
At Odds: Women and the Family in America from the Revolution to the Present.
Oxford University Press, 1980.

An elucidation of the background of such perplexing modern concerns as how to reconcile the demands of the family with women's right to equality. "After two hundred years of development," the author concluded in 1979, "both the future of the family and the fulfillment of women as persons are at odds as never before." Though historian Oscar Handlin said in the *New Republic* that the book betrays "large failings of understanding, indeed of common sense," Lawrence Stone wrote in the *New York Times* that this is "the most perceptive, the most thoughtful, the most balanced and the most readable work that has ever been written on the evolution of the American family from the eighteenth to the twentieth century."

527 pages; ISBN 0-19-502934-8.

Hofstadter, Richard.
Anti-Intellectualism in American Life.
Random House, 1966.

A classic examination of American character and aspirations. The book as a whole makes a provocative accompaniment to the usual narrative of

U.S. history. Its final section, "Education in a Democracy," is indispensable reading for educators and others concerned with schooling.

432 pages; ISBN 0-394-70317-0.

Brinkley, Alan.
Voices of Protest: Huey Long, Father Coughlin and the Great Depression.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1982.

An examination of political protest during the Great Depression in which the author studies the sagas of the demagogic Huey Long and Father Coughlin. If they "offered in the end an uncertain vision," Brinkley writes, "they only reflected the uncertainty of the society in which they lived. They spoke to a people enchanted by the material fruits of industrialization but troubled by the inequalities of wealth and power that accompanied them; a people who had spent more than a century trying to devise ways to preserve the one and destroy the other, but a people whose search for solutions had grown more feeble and ineffectual with every passing decade." C. Vann Woodward, appraising this study in the *New York Review of Books*, commented that "In spite of its rather unsympathetic subjects, [this] is a sensitive and subtle work moderated by grace and restraint and tempered by a caution that in no way suggests timidity."

348 pages; ISBN 0-394-71628-0.

Beschloss, Michael R.
Mayday: Eisenhower, Khrushchev and the U-2 Affair.
Harper and Row, Vintage Books, 1987.

A study of the U-2 spy flight incident of 1960. A well-wrought and often gripping account that traces this important Cold War episode from minute to minute, it sometimes reads like a thriller. *Time* magazine's Hugh Sidey calls it a "terrific book" and comments that "I was around during the U-2 episode and this is the first time that I've been able to fit it all together and understand what happened."

512 pages; ISBN 0-06-091407-6, PL1407, PL.

Kammen, Michael.
A Machine That Would Go of Itself: The Constitution in American Culture.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1987.

A cultural history of the U.S. Constitution. The author terms it "a study in popular constitutionalism, by which I mean the perceptions and mis-

perceptions, uses and abuses, knowledge and ignorance of ordinary Americans." Though thoroughly documented, it is uncommonly readable, "a book packed with little-known information and some fascinating discoveries," observed Walter Berns in *Commentary*.

576 pages; ISBN 0-394-75600-2.

Diggins, John P.
The Lost Soul of American Politics: Virtue, Self-Interest, and the Foundations of Liberalism.
University of Chicago Press, 1986.

An examinaton of American political thought from the nation's founding to the Civil War. Diggins seeks to show "what happens to a political culture when ends come to absorb means, wealth replaces work, and the mere possession of things replaces the production of goods as the goal of life." The author goes back to the Enlightenment ideas undergirding the American revolution and then forward to Emerson, Tocqueville, Melville, and Lincoln in pursuit of what he calls "the soul of American liberalism." A somewhat anguished and argumentative work, Gordon Wood wrote in the *New York Review of Books* that it is "not in any conventional sense of the term" an actual work of history. "Beneath all of its scholarly apparatus," Wood notes, "it is a very personal essay in cultural criticism, a veritable *cri du couer*. Diggins is not simply quarreling with some fellow historians; he is quarreling with modernity itself, with all of its relativity, skepticism and confusion."

410 pages; ISBN 0-226-14877-7.

Kluger, Richard.
Simple Justice: The History of* Brown *v.* Board of Education *and Black America's Struggle for Equality.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1977.

One of the best books available on the 1954 *Brown* v. *Board of Education* decision that outlawed school segregation. A weighty yet engrossing volume, it is a full-scale history of the events that led up to the epic Supreme Court case, including the antecedent laws and decisions, the lives of the plaintiffs (and their attorneys, advocates, and antagonists), the tortuous course of the case itself, and some of the consequences of the 1954 decision. "Kluger's intriguing, encyclopedic and deeply researched book," commented the *New York Times* reviewer, "turns what might have been a dry text into an exceedingly human drama. . . . The author has great empathy with the people he is writing

about and conveys a real feel of the local scene. . . . Kluger has written a vivid history of the struggle to win equal rights for blacks through the courts. His descriptions of the behind-the-scenes functioning of the NAACP and the Supreme Court are novel and revealing."

823 pages; ISBN 0-394-72255-8.

Weinstein, Allen.
Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case.
Random House, Vintage Books, 1979.

Perhaps the single best account of the Alger Hiss–Whittaker Chambers affair. Though 40 years past, this remains one of the formative events of postwar American history, and its echoes continue into our day. Enthusiasts may prefer to read the protagonists' memoirs (Chambers's *Witness*, in particular, is a riveting account of that complex man's personal political hegira), but those mainly interested in what happened will find Weinstein's book satisfactory. (Bear in mind, though, that every single account of this episode is automatically controversial.) Garry Wills wrote in the *New York Review of Books* that "Weinstein's use of his material is impeccably fair. . . . The narrative of the story is clearly told. . . . So far as any one book can dispel a large historical mystery, this book does it magnificently."

674 pages; ISBN 0-394-72830-0.

Hofstadter, Richard.
The Progressive Historians: Turner, Beard, Parrington.
University of Chicago Press, 1979.

A work of historiography; i.e., a study of the writing of history and the people who engage in that craft. Hofstadter's subjects are Frederick Jackson Turner, Charles A. Beard, and V. L. Parrington, three of the major interpretive American historians of the early twentieth century. "Part biography, part intellectual history, part scholarly polemic," commented *Time* magazine, "the volume is a sharp but generous inquiry into the underlying conceptions of American history and the reasons for writing it."

498 pages; ISBN 0-226-34818-O, P841.

VI. European and World History

Ortega y Gasset, Jose.
The Revolt of the Masses.
W.W. Norton, 1964 (originally published in Spanish in 1932).

Not an easy read but one of the seminal historical, political, philosophical works of the century. Writing in 1930, the Spanish author asks whether a liberal republican form of government can survive mass politics and the mass demands of people unschooled in the Western sources of liberalism, unaware of the costs that must be borne to preserve civility and freedom. "This is a profound book," said the *New York Times* reviewer, "and one that is vital and vigorous from the first page to the last. . . ."

190 pages; ISBN 0-393-09637-8.

Stone, Norman.
Europe Transformed, 1878–1919.
Harvard University Press, 1984.

A scholarly account of four eventful decades that profoundly influenced not just the European continent but also the United States and the rest of the world. "The author," says *Choice* magazine, "tries to answer the question of why an extraordinary period of peace, prosperity, and great inventions also spawned four years of terrible slaughter caused by World War I, bolshevism in Russia, the rise of various shades of fascism in different countries, and the disintegration of the European economy."

448 pages; ISBN 0-674-26923-3.

Serge, Victor.
Memoirs of a Revolutionary.
Writers and Readers, 1984 (originally published in French in 1951).

An unusual autobiographical work by a man his editor describes as "an anarchist, a Bolshevik, a Trotskyist, a revisionist-Marxist, and, on his own confession, a 'personalist.'" Here is how the *New Yorker* character-

izes Serge and his memoirs: "He was born in Belgium of Russian revolutionary parents. The Bolshevik Revolution found him in jail in France on a political charge, but as soon as he was free he made his way to Russia to serve what he hoped would be the liberation of mankind. Bolshevik reality drove him into opposition by the late nineteen-twenties; he was in jail in Russia on a political charge by the early nineteen-thirties. His friends abroad got him out just before Stalin's great purges began, and he lived in Western Europe, watching but no longer making history, until the German victories at the start of the Second World War. Then he fled to Mexico, where he died. . . . [He] was an excellent writer, and he reports what he knew at first hand—the condition of the poor, the terrible workings of revolution—with a style as pithy as his veracity is irreproachable."

472 pages; ISBN 0-86316-070-0.

Conquest, Robert.
The Harvest of Sorrow: Soviet Collectivization and the Terror-Famine.
Oxford University Press, 1987.

Another work dealing with some of the woes of Stalin's Russia. This is the tale of the "terror-famine" induced by the forced collectivization of Soviet agriculture and the death of millions of Ukranian peasants that resulted. "Conquest's rigorous analysis of the statistical evidence and the intricacies of Marxist doctrine does not make for light reading," commented *Newsweek*. "But he has brought together an enormous amount of vivid evidence from firsthand testimonials and novels. And by the time a reader has finished this superb work of history, a famous Russian saying coined in those dark times has taken on a sinister new resonance: 'Moscow does not believe in tears.'"

432 pages; ISBN 0-19-505180-7.

Johnson, Paul.
Modern Times: The World from the Twenties to the Eighties.
Harper and Row, 1985.

A lengthy and profound account of this period, dealing particularly with the bankruptcy of moral relativism, social engineering, and totalitarianism. This is a wide-ranging, influential, opinionated, and controversial work, judged by some reviewers to be less than entirely persuasive, but boldly wrought and, despite its bulk, surprisingly accessible. Here is a small sample, drawn from the beginning of Johnson's last chapter: "In the six decades which followed the First World War, knowledge ex-

panded more rapidly than ever before. Yet in many ways an educated man in the 1980s was less equipped with certitudes than an ancient Egyptian in 2500 BC. At least the Egyptian of the Old Kingdom had a clear cosmology. In 1915 Einstein had destroyed the Newtonian universe, and the cosmology substituted in the 1920s was merely speculative since the General Theory of Relativity was a classical explanation and could not be used to describe a singularity such as the conditions at the moment of creation. The mathematical model of the Big Bang, in which matter expanded from zero some 6,000–10,000 million years ago, with everything essential occurring in the first twenty minutes, was no more demonstrable than the Judaeo-Christian hypothesis first crudely described in Chapter One of the Book of Genesis, which it strikingly resembled."

832 pages; ISBN 0-06-091210-3.

Orwell, George.
Homage to Catalonia.
Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1969 (originally published in 1938).

A classic piece of reportage and analysis by the celebrated author of *1984* and *Animal Farm*. It is his account of the Spanish Civil War, here splendidly introduced by Lionel Trilling, who skillfully places the work in historical and intellectual context. Orwell had traveled to Spain as a journalist, but then enlisted as a militiaman in one of the Socialists' fighting units. He hoped to transfer to a Communist unit, but while in Spain he grew deeply disillusioned with communism. The historical significance of this work lies in its account of that disillusionment.

232 pages; ISBN 0-15-642117-8.

Churchill, Winston.
The Gathering Storm.
Houghton Mifflin, 1986 (originally published in 1948).

The late, great British prime minister's own account of the beginnings of World War II, which he termed "the unnecessary war." The first of five volumes, it deals with the events (and mistakes and blind spots) of the period between the wars and with the "twilight war" (from September, 1939, until May, 1940). This is a long work and is written in Churchill's grand prose. It "provides the reader with the opportunity of meeting a genuinely great man," commented the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s reviewer, "perhaps the greatest man of his time. When such a man can tell his own story and a story of world importance, wrapping both into a

natural package and presenting the whole in a noble, rolling, yet shrewdly ample prose style—well, you have the once-in-a-generation kind of book. And this is precisely that."

784 pages; ISBN 0-395-41055-X.

Arendt, Hannah.
Eichmann in Jerusalem: A Report on the Banality of Evil.
Penguin, 1977.

Both an account of the Nazi war criminal's trial (which Arendt covered as an observer for the *New Yorker*) and a deeper examination of the implications of that trial. Bruno Bettelheim wrote of the book in the *New Republic* that it "views Eichmann and his trial as posing the problem of the human being within a modern totalitarian system. . . . While I would recommend this book for many reasons, the most important one is that our best protection against oppressive control and dehumanizing totalitarianism is still a personal understanding of events as they happen."

303 pages; ISBN 0-14-004450-7.

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